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APPROVED BY NEA: ALFRED L. ATHERTON, JR.

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SS, MO, AG

SUBJECT:ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON'S MEETING WITH
MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR BOUTALEB, JANUARY 8

SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR BOUTALEB REQUESTED TOUR D'HORIZON
PRIOR TO HIS RETURN TO MOROCCO JANUARY 9 FOR CONSULTATIONS
WITH KING HASSAN. BOUTALEB DISCUSSED SPANISH SAHARA AND
MILITARY BUILD-UP ON PART OF ALGERIA WHICH, ALONG WITH
ALGERIAN ASSISTANCE TO F POLISARIO, HE DESCRIBED AS FUTILE
ACTIVITIES ATTEMPTING TO INTERNATIONALIZE AN ISSUE WHICH
ALGERIA HAS ALREADY LOST. HE EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT THERE
WOULD BE HOSTILITIES BETWEEN MOROCCO AND ALGERIA IN NEAR
FUTURE AND CAST DOUBT ON LONGEVITY OF NEW BOUMEDIENE-
QADHAFI AGREEMENT. AMBASSADOR BOUTALEB DREW PARALLELS
BETWEEN SAHARA AND ANGOLA AND REQUESTED CLARIFICATION OF US

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POLICY IN LATTER DISPUTE. ON FORTHCOMING SECURITY COUNCIL

DEBATE ON MIDDLE EAST BOUTALEB URGED US NOT TO USE ITS VETO AS THIS WOULD PRODUCE ADVERSE SHOCK WAVES THROUGHOUT THE ARAB WORLD. MR. ATHERTON EXPRESSED US APPRECIATION TO KING HASSAN FOR PERMITTING US NUCLEAR-POWERED WARSHIPS TO CALL AT MOROCCAN PORTS. ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON ALSO REITERATED US POSITION OF NEUTRALITY ON SUBSTANCE OF SAHARA ISSUE AND MADE STRONG REQUEST FOR GOM SUPPORT, DURING UPCOMING OAU SUMMIT, FOR GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY IN ANGOLA. ON MIDDLE EAST ATHERTON REAFFIRMED US INTENTION TO ACT IN INTEREST OF FURTHERING ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS AND PRESERVATION OF EXISTING NEGOTIATING FRAMEWORK. END SUMMARY.

1. HOURS PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR CONSULTATION WITH KING HASSAN IN RABAT, MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR ABDELHADI BOUTALEB MET WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON JANUARY 8. BOUTALEB OPENED WITH FAMILIAR RESTATEMENT OF MOROCCAN VIEW OF ITS POSITION IN SAHARA AS LEGITIMATE REESTABLISHMENT OF CONTROL OVER WHAT SHOULD ALWAYS HAVE BEEN MOROCCAN TERRITORY. HE NOTED MASSIVE ALGERIAN MILITARY BUILD-UP AND COMMENTED THAT, WHILE HE DOES NOT EXPECT WAR BETWEEN MOROCCO AND ALGERIA IN NEAR FUTURE, ALGERIANS ARE CARRYING ON CAMPAIGN TO MAKE TROUBLE WITHIN MAGHREB AND TO INTERNATIONALIZE CONCERN OVER A REGIONAL ISSUE. HE UNDERLINED ALGERIAN SUPPORT FOR POLISARIO INCLUDING ALGERIAN OFFICERS LEADING POLISARIO GROUPS WITHIN SAHARA, AND AN ALGERIAN UNIT MANHANDLING MAURITANIAN FRONTIER POST (AN INCIDENT WHICH RECEIVED LITTLE PUBLICITY), AS EVIDENCE OF BOUMEDIENE'S FUTILE ATTEMPTS TO PREVENT MOROCCAN/MAURITANIAN REASSERTION OF AUTHORITY OVER TERRITORY WHICH IS RIGHTFULLY THEIRS. MOROCCAN/MAURITANIAN POSITION, BOUTALEB INSISTED, IS SANCTIFIED BY MADRID TRIPARTITE ACCORD AND, DESPITE SIZE OF MAJORITY FOR ALGERIAN RESOLUTIONS, BY UNGA PASSAGE OF PRO-MOROCCAN RESOLUTION ON SUBJECT OF SAHARA. BOUTALEB DESCRIBED RECENT BOUMEDIENE/QADHAFI PACT AS BEING IN CONTEXT OF ALGERIAN ATTEMPTS TO INTERNATIONALIZE SAHARAN DISPUTE BUT EXPRESSED LITTLE FAITH IN LONGEVITY OF ARRANGEMENT DUE TO QADHAFI'S WELL-KNOWN HISTORY OF FREQUENT MARRIAGES AND DIVORCES.

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2. MR. ATHERTON EXPRESSED APPRECIATION OF USG FOR KING HASSAN'S AGREEMENT TO LET US NUCLEAR-POWERED WARSHIPS CALL AT MOROCCAN PORTS AT TIMES OF OUR CHOOSING.

3. ON SPANISH SAHARA MR. ATHERTON NOTED THAT US HAD URGED NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AND WAS PLEASED THAT THREE OF THE PARTIES TO THE DISPUTE HAD REACHED AMICABLE DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION. WHILE REAFFIRMING THAT US POSITION HAS BEEN AND

REMAINS ONE OF NEUTRALITY ON SUBSTANCE OF SAHARA ISSUE, MR. ATHERTON DESCRIBED INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US AS GENERALLY IN ACCORD WITH THAT OF MOROCCO AS REGARDS REACTION OF ALGERIA AND ITS EFFORTS TO STIMULATE OPPOSITION TO MOROCCO IN SAHARA THROUGH POLISARIO. MR. ATHERTON EXPRESSED US PLEASURE IN CONTINUING DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS BETWEEN GOM, GIRM, AND GOA AND ADVISED THAT IT IS IMPORTANT FOR MOROCCO TO CONTINUE AND TO BE SEEN TO CONTINUE THESE EFFORTS REGARDLESS OF IMMEDIATE RESULTS AS SUCH ACTIONS CONSTITUTE PUBLIC DISPLAY OF MOROCCAN GOOD WILL.

HE STATED FURTHER THAT TO EXTENT USG CAN PLAY USEFUL ROLE, WE WILL ENCOURAGE FINAL DIPLOMATIC SOLUTION.

4. AMBASSADOR BOUTALEB MADE CLEAR MOROCCO'S POSITION THAT MATTER OF SAHARA IS IN FACT SOLVED AND ONLY AREA IN WHICH DIPLOMATIC OR OTHER TYPE OF SOLUTION IS NOW NEEDED IS IN EFFORT WHICH WOULD RESULT IN REVERSAL OF ALGERIAN POSITION ON SAHARA AND STAND DOWN OF ITS MILITARY BUILD-UP. BOUTALEB THEN COMMENTED THAT MANY PARALLELS EXIST BETWEEN SOVIET AND ALGERIAN ROLES IN SAHARA AND ANGOLA. BOTH, HE SAID, ARE RESULTS OF EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH RUSSIAN OR ALGERIAN POINTS OF CONTROL ON ATLANTIC COAST OF AFRICA AND BOTH CONSTITUTE A DANGER TO US AND TO MOROCCAN INTERESTS.

5. MR. ATHERTON DESCRIBED THE ANGOLA CRISIS AS EXCEEDINGLY DELICATE AND NOTED THAT WITHIN LIMITS SET BY US CONGRESS WE HAVE TRIED TO TAKE A STRONG AND FAIR POSITION. PRESIDENT FORD HAS SENT MESSAGES TO A NUMBER OF HEADS OF STATE INCLUDING KING HASSAN DESCRIBING OUR BELIEF THAT ANGOLA SHOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO FOREIGN INTERVENTION AND THAT SOVIET, CUBAN, AND SOUTH AFRICAN SOLDIERS NOW SHOULD LEAVE. HE REMARKED THAT US PARTICULARLY CONCERNED OVER
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SOVIET INTRUSION INTO AREA WHERE THEY HAVE NO LEGITIMATE INTEREST AND URGED GOM TO TAKE STRONG POSITION ON END TO FOREIGN INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA AT UPCOMING OAU SUMMIT. THE US RECOGNIZES THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRESENCE COMPLICATES MATTERS FOR THIRD WORLD NATIONS, BUT WE HAVE INDICATIONS THEY ARE PREPARING TO RETURN TO SOUTH AFRICA.

6. BOUTALEB COMMENTED THAT UNCERTAINTIES REGARDING US POSITION ON ANGOLA MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR AFRICAN STATES TO TAKE STRONG STAND. HOWEVER, HE AGREED THAT SOUTH AFRICAN PRESENCE IS FACTOR LEADING TO GREATEST COMPLICATION. HE ASKED IF WE ENVISAGED A SHIFT TOWARD US RECOGNITION OF MPLA SHOULD THAT FACTION APPEAR TO BE GAINING UPPER HAND IN ANGOLAN STRUGGLE AND ASKED FOR A FULLER STATEMENT OF US POLICIES ON ANGOLA.

7. MR. ATHERTON STATED THAT WE FAVOR GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY WHICH WOULD INCLUDE MPLA AND OTHER FACTIONS IN NEGOTIATED RESOLUTION WITHIN AFRICAN CONTEXT. HE THEN ARRANGED FULLER BRIEFING FOR BOUTALEB WITH DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS MULCAHY.

8. IN DISCUSSION OF UPCOMING UN SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE ON MIDDLE EAST, BOUTALEB EXPRESSED HOPE THAT US COULD AVOID VETO OF RESOLUTIONS IT MIGHT CONSIDER UNFAVORABLE. HE REMARKED THAT US VETO IN THIS DELICATE AREA SO SHOCKS ARAB OPINION THAT SC DEBATE COULD BECOME US DEBACLE WITH ARAB

COUNTRIES GETTING IMPRESSION OF BIASED REFEREE WHO, WHEN GAME IS GOING POORLY FOR HIS SIDE, CALLS OFF GAME.

9. MR. ATHERTON REMINDED BOUTALEB THAT US SUPPORTED RESOLUTION CALLING FOR SC MEETING IN SPITE OF SEVERE ISRAELI CRITICISM. WE FEEL CONSTRUCTIVE OUTCOME OF SC DEBATE SO IMPORTANT THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER ASKED ATHERTON PERSONALLY TO VISIT MIDDLE EAST AND EXPLAIN OUR POSITION AND OUR LIMITATIONS TO APPROPRIATE GOVERNMENTS. WE CONSIDER IT ESSENTIAL THAT WHATEVER COMES OUT OF SC DEBATE NOT UNDERMINE EXISTING NEGOTIATING FRAMEWORK PROVIDED BY RESOLUTIONS 242, 338 AND GENEVA ARRANGEMENT. US CONCERN IS THAT ATTEMPT MIGHT BE MADE THROUGH SC RESOLUTION.
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LUTIONS TO MODIFY EXISTING PRINCIPLES AND FRAMEWORK IN WAY WHICH COULD PUT A STOP TO NEGOTIATING PROCESS. IN REPLY TO A QUESTION MR. ATHERTON NOTED THAT ACCEPTANCE OF UN RESOLUTION 242 HAS BEEN OFFICIAL ISRAELI POSITION SINCE NEGOTIATIONS BEGAN BUT DIFFERENCES EXIST OVER INTERPRETATION OF THE RESOLUTION. WE EXPECT PRINCIPAL SC ISSUE TO CONCERN PALESTINE AND US HAS PUBLICLY SAID THAT ANY MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT MUST TAKE INTO ACCOUNT INTERESTS OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. PALESTINIAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT IS A SEPARATE PROBLEM. US CONCERN IS THAT SUBJECT OF PALESTINIAN FUTURE MUST BE DEALT WITH THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS AND IF THERE IS ATTEMPT TO PREJUDGE DIFFICULT ISSUE BY OUTSIDE BODY SUCH AS SECURITY COUNCIL IT COULD SLOW NEGOTIATIONS. WE TAKE SERIOUSLY ARAB OPINION BUT ALSO TAKE SERIOUSLY OUR UNIQUE RESPONSIBILITY TO STIMULATE GENUINE NEGOTIATIONS LOOKING TOWARD GENUINE JUST AND LASTING PEACE SO US WILL LOOK AT SC DEBATE IN TERMS OF WHAT COURSE WILL AID FURTHER DEBATE AND NEGOTIATIONS. ANY ACTION WE TAKE, AND THAT COULD INCLUDE A VETO, WILL BE TAKEN TO FURTHER THE NEGOTIATIONS, NOT TO STALL THEM, AND SHOULD THEREFORE BE SEEN AS A BEGINNING AND NOT AN END. WE WILL BE ACTING ON BASIS OF OUR JUDGMENT OF WHAT BEST SERVES US INTEREST IN PROMOTING

MIDDLE EAST PEACE. KISSINGER

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